Modification to export licensing policies

1487. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether U.S. has agreed to ease export controls on Indian Civilian nuclear and space facilities after PM's visit to USA;

(b) if so, whether U.S. have made modification to U.S. export licensing policies that will foster cooperation in commercial space programmes and permit certain exports to power plants at safeguarded nuclear facilities;

(c) if so, whether this modification also include removing ISRO headquarters from so-called Entity List of Department of Commerce; and

(d) if so, to what extent it would be helpful for India and whether all negotiations in this regard have fully settled?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) The completion of Phase One of Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP) was announced in a Joint Statement on 17 September, 2004 during Foreign Secretary's visit to US. It was just before the PM's visit to USA. These efforts have enabled the U.S. to make modifications to US export licensing policies that will foster cooperation in commercial space programs and permit certain exports to power plants at safeguarded nuclear facilities.

(c) Yes Sir, ISRO Headquarters has been removed from the U.S. Department of Commerce Entity List.

(d) The move would definitely improve the predictability and levels of approvals for export. Since January, 2004, the two Governments have worked closely to conclude Phase One of the NSSP. This has included implementation of measures to address export control concerns. Since then two meetings-one in New Delhi on Oct. 21 and the other in Washington on Nov. 18 have taken place of the Implementation Group of NSSP to explore ways to move into the next phase.

Pakistan President's statement regarding Indo-Pak talks

1488. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the recent

statement of President General Musharraf to the effect that the 'Vibes that are now coming do not encourage a process of normalisation of relations with Pakistan; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes.

(b) Government remain committed to continue with the ongoing process of confidence building, dialogue and cooperation with Pakistan in an atmosphere free from terrorism and violence.

Participation in SAARC

1489. SHRI R.K. ANAND: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have taken a decision not to participate in the forthcoming SAARC summit to be hosted by Bangladesh; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Inter-University debate conducted by ICWA

1490. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Council of World Affairs had started annual Inter-University Debate in memory of Smt. Indira Gandhi, Champion of World Peace, to provide students a center for national integration;

(b) if so, since when the debate commenced and continued and the number of Universities that took part during the years 1996 to 2002 by sponsoring students for this conference annually; and

(c) how much amount was spent by Government for organizing this debate?